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2012 | 15

State of Washington creates medical provider network

The Washington state legislature passed several workers' compensation reforms in [Substitute Senate Bill 5801](#). Among other changes, the bill establishes the framework for the creation of a medical provider network (MPN) by the state's Department of Labor & Industries (L&I).

The legislature's goal for the MPN is to provide high-quality medical care that helps both injured workers and their employers by supporting recovery, thus reducing unnecessary costs. Research has shown that injured workers treated by healthcare providers who use best practices for occupational medicine generally have better outcomes. The MPN will encourage the use of industry best practices.

Highlights of the MPN regulations include:

- L&I will manage the election of providers and the overall MPN;
- L&I began enrolling physicians in the MPN in early 2012;
- Beginning January 1, 2013, only physicians in the MPN will be able to provide treatment to injured employees beyond the first doctor visit;
- The MPN will take effect January 1, 2013 for all dates of loss;
- As of now, not all provider types are required to enroll in the MPN (see attached FAQ for more details). Injured workers will be allowed to receive treatment outside the MPN from these providers when appropriate.

We have been preparing for the implementation to ensure our readiness by the January 1 date. Our Washington-based claims handling teams are undergoing intensive training, and our information technology team is working on the system enhancements required to accommodate the MPN. We are also implementing best-practice quality processes surrounding the transfer of injured workers to MPN providers.

Additionally, we have added the state's MPN notification flyer to the initial packet we issue to Washington-based workers upon notice of injury and have loaded the MPN transition letter into our JURIS® claims system.

Please review our [overview and FAQ document](#) concerning the Washington MPN, as it provides further details on our plans and the actions being taken by the state of Washington.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your Sedgwick client services representative.

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